

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 VATICAN 005296

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT. FOR EUR/WE (MENNU TI), NEA/NGA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PHUM ETTC E AID IZ PHUM ETTC E AID IZ VT VTPREL
SUBJECT: CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS PREPARES FOR WAR IN IRAQ;
CRITICIZES SANCTIONS AND PREDICTS HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE

SUMMARY

11. (SBU) A CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS (CI) DELEGATION LED BY
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 VATICA 05296 01 OF 02 291503Z
THE DIRECTOR OF CARITAS' BRITISH OFFICE (CAFOD) HAS RETURNED
FROM A FIVE-DAY VISIT TO IRAQ TO ASSESS IRAQ'S CAPACITY TO
RESPOND TO POTENTIAL HUMANITARIAN NEEDS IN THE WAKE OF
MILITARY ACTION. CARITAS PREDICTED THAT MILITARY ACTION
WOULD CAUSE A HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE, AFFECTING CHILDREN
THE MOST, AND URGED THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE BE DONE TO
AVOID WAR. CARITAS' ACCESS TO IRAQ WAS DEPENDENT IN PART ON
PROVIDING ADVOCACY REGARDING CURRENT PROBLEMS ATTRIBUTED TO
U.N. SANCTIONS. THEY ARE EXPECTED TO RELEASE AN OFFICIAL
STATEMENT SHORTLY THAT WILL IN TURN HELP SHAPE THE HOLY
SEE'S OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES OF
WAR. CI HAS CALLED A MEETING AT ITS VATICAN HEADQUARTERS
DECEMBER 17-18 TO DISCUSS ITS OFFICIAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE
STRATEGY IN THE EVENT OF WAR IN IRAQ. END SUMMARY.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF WAR AND SANCTIONS

12. A CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS DELEGATION LED BY CARITAS'
BRITISH OFFICE HEAD, AND INCLUDING CI'S GLOBAL ISSUES DESK
OFFICER, IRAQ OFFICE DIRECTOR (BASED IN AMMAN, JORDAN), AND
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA OFFICE DIRECTOR FROM BEIRUT MET
WITH CHURCH OFFICIALS, IRAQI DEPUTY PM TARIQ AZIZ AND OTHER
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DURING A RECENT VISIT TO IRAQ TO ASSES
THE IMPLICATIONS OF MILITARY ACTION AND CURRENT SANCTIONS.
CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS IS A 154-MEMBER FEDERATION OF
CATHOLIC RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES OPERATIVE IN 198
COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES, HEADQUARTERED IN VATICAN CITY BUT
INDEPENDENT FROM THE HOLY SEE. ITS VATICAN CITY OFFICE
PROVIDES A FORUM FOR EXCHANGE AND DIALOGUE AMONG MEMBER
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 VATICA 05296 01 OF 02 291503Z
AGENCIES AND ADVOCACY SERVICES IN INTERNATIONAL FORA.

12. (SBU) CI TOLD US "OFF THE RECORD" THAT ENTRY TO IRAQ WAS
CONDITIONAL ON CARITAS SUBSEQUENTLY ACTING AS AN ADVOCATE
FOR THE IRAQI CAUSE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA. THE IRAQIS
DID NOT WANT CI CONDUCTING THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPACITY
ASSESSMENT THEY HAD ORIGINALLY INTENDED. HOWEVER, CI
BELIEVED IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GAIN ACCESS TO IRAQ AND SO TOOK
THE MIDDLE ROAD BY PROMISING ADVOCACY ASSISTANCE WHILE
CHECKING IRAQ'S PREPAREDNESS FOR ANY MILITARY ACTIVITY THAT
MIGHT RESULT IN A FURTHER HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY. DURING THE
VISIT, THE DELEGATION WAS PERMITTED TO BRING IN A
PHOTOGRAPHER -- WHOSE ACTIVITIES WERE CLOSELY MONITORED.
THE GROUP ENCOUNTERED SOME IRAQI OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENCE
OF THE CI OFFICIALS FROM AMMAN AND BEIRUT BECAUSE THEY SPOKE
ARABIC -- DISPENSING WITH THE NEED FOR AN OFFICIAL
GOVERNMENT INTERPRETER.

13. (SBU) IN AN UNOFFICIAL INITIAL ASSESSMENT RELEASED TO
POST, THE CI DELEGATION REPORTED THAT WOMAN AND CHILDREN
WERE IN "BAD CONDITION" CLAIMING ONE IN THREE CHILDREN IS
MALNOURISHED. CARITAS MAINTAINS THAT SANCTIONS ARE TO BLAME
FOR 75 PERCENT OF THE IRAQI POPULATION EXPERIENCING "POOR
LIVING CONDITIONS" WITH THE AVERAGE INCOME BETWEEN \$3 AND \$5
PER DAY -- "NOT EVEN ENOUGH FOR BASIC NECESSITIES." CI
CLAIMED THAT WATER ACCESS AND SECURITY HAS DETERIORATED OVER
THE LAST 10 YEARS, QUOTING UN FIGURES THAT ONLY 43 PERCENT
OF THE RURAL POPULATION HAS DIRECT ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER.
CI'S ASSESSMENT WILL SUGGEST THAT A MILITARY STRIKE ON IRAQ
WOULD CAUSE "TREMENDOUS PROBLEMS," WITH CHILDREN BEING THE
MOST AFFECTED. PREVIOUS CARITAS DELEGATIONS TO IRAQ HAVE
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 VATICA 05296 01 OF 02 291503Z
MADE SIMILAR ASSESSMENTS.

14. (U) CI INSISTS THAT EVERYTHING MUST BE DONE TO PREPARE
FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF A MILITARY STRIKE, BUT THAT THE

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY "MUST ALSO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID WAR." CI CLAIMS MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAQ WOULD CAUSE A HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE WITH SEVERE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION. FOLLOWING UP ON THE VISIT, CI HAS CALLED A MEETING AT ITS VATICAN CITY HEADQUARTERS FOR DECEMBER 17 AND 18 TO DISCUSS ITS OFFICIAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE STRATEGY FOR IRAQ.

COMMENT

15. (SBU) CI'S OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON ITS DELEGATION'S VISIT TO IRAQ WILL BE RELEASED SHORTLY. THIS STATEMENT IN TURN WILL BE USED BY THE HOLY SEE IN DEVELOPING ITS OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE MORAL AND HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES OF MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAQ. CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS WILL BE A KEY PLAYER IN ANY EVENTUAL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED PTQ4992

PAGE 01 VATICA 05296 02 OF 02 291503Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	USNW-00
	DODE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	VCE-00	NEA-00	NSAE-00	PER-00	TEST-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/002W	
					-----000059	291531Z	/38

R 291345Z OCT 02
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC
EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VATICAN 005296

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT. FOR EUR/WE (MENNUTI), NEA/NGA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL PHUM ETTC EAID IZ PHUM ETTC EAID IZ VT VTPREL](#)
SUBJECT: CARITAS INTERNATIONALIS PREPARES FOR WAR IN IRAQ;
CRITICIZES SANCTIONS AND PREDICTS HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE

IRAQ. CI'S CRITICAL VIEWS ON SANCTIONS DERIVE IN PART FROM POPE JOHN PAUL II'S BROADLY STATED POSITION THAT SANCTIONS GENERALLY ARE WRONG BECAUSE THEY IMPACT MOST ON THE VULNERABLE AND WEAK. EMBASSY WILL ENGAGE WITH CI DIRECTLY TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SANCTIONS RESTS WITH SADDAM AND HIS VIOLATION OF UN RESOLUTIONS. EVEN WITH
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 VATICA 05296 02 OF 02 291503Z
A BETTER UNDERSTANDING, HOWEVER, CI IS LIKELY TO MAINTAIN ITS VIEW THAT MILITARY ACTION IN IRAQ WILL RESULT IN INCREASED SUFFERING FOR THE IRAQI PEOPLE -- AT LEAST OVER THE SHORT-TERM.

NICHOLSON

UNCLASSIFIED

>

2002VATICA05296 - Classification: UNCLASSIFIED